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ARCHAEOLOGIST WHO LED AYODHYA EXCAVATION DIES

B B Lal, who served as the chief of Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) from 1968 to 1972, died on Saturday aged 101

HIS TEAM FOUND REMAINS OF HINDU TEMPLE

Lal led a nine-member ASI team on a project called Archaeology of Ramayana Sites, which excavated five sites mentioned in Ramayana, including Ayodhya between 1975 and 1977. During the excavation at Ayodhya in 1976-77, his team found columns of a Hindu temple below the spot where the Ram temple is now being built

SC RELIED ON HIS FINDINGS IN AYODHYA CASE

- His findings formed the basis of Supreme Court's Ayodhya verdict
- Lal was conferred Padma Vibhushan(pic) last year
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted praising Lal's unparalleled contributions to archaeology. "He will be remembered as a great intellectual who deepened our connect with our rich past," he said

20+

BOOKS AND OVER 150 RESEARCH PAPERS WRITTEN BY B B LAL

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Bommai sounds poll bugle, tears into Congress over series of scams

We will transform this 'Janaspandana' into 'Vijayotsava' in 2023 polls, says chief minister

DEVARAJ B HIREHALLI
@ Doddaballapura

CHIEF Minister Basavaraj Bommai sounded the poll bugle for the 2023 Assembly polls at the BJP's 'Janaspandana' rally by tearing into the Congress party over the alleged scams that took place when the party was in power in the state.

He was speaking at the twice-postponed rally which was held with much fanfare to celebrate his completion of one year as chief minister. The mega event, attended by an estimated three lakh people, took place at Doddaballapura, 40 km from Bengaluru, on Saturday.

"Yours (Congress) was a 100 per cent corrupt government. A bill of ₹40 crore was claimed without implementing works in the Minor Irrigation Department. Scams in Arkavathy Layout denotification, distribution of laptops to students, clearance of 36,000 borewells without identifying the beneficiaries, purchase of pillows for SC/ST students -- all happened when the Congress was in power," alleged Bommai, while warning that the BJP will expose the alleged misdeeds of the Siddararamaiah-led Congress government which ruled the state between 2013 and 2018.

State government is heading towards implementing the NEP, semiconductor policy, industrial policy, R&D policy, and employment policy, as Karnataka must surge ahead in all fields — Basavaraj Bommai, CM

BJP holding rally using corruption money: Siddu

Congress Legislative Party leader Siddaramaiah alleged that the BJP has organised the Janaspandana rally using money earned from corruption. The real Janaspandana would be to address woes of flood-hit people across Karnataka, he said. P4

Bommai's warning comes in the backdrop of the Congress party's campaign against the BJP government on corruption issues, especially the '40% commission' charges levelled by the contractors' association against the government.

The CM also alleged that the free rice scheme started by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government at the Centre only filled the empty pockets of Siddaramaiah government. He added that young IAS officer Anurag Tewari, who was probing the scam in the Food and Civil Supplies Department, was found dead under mysterious circumstances. The CM also raked up scams related to II PUC question paper leak, recruitment of teachers and cropping up of the name of the son Siddaramaiah's cabinet colleague in illegal sand mining.

"The Congress government did not take action against any scams, whereas our government didn't spare even the top brass of the police accused in the PSI recruitment scam," he claimed. Bommai also said that the people of Karnataka saw corruption at its peak during the Siddaramaiah government, and will never vote the Congress back to power again. "We have started from here and will go ahead with rallies across the state. We will expose your (Congress) true colours and the lotus will bloom again. We will transform this 'Janaspandana' into 'Vijayotsava' in 2023 polls. If you have guts, try to stop us," he challenged. CONTINUED ON: P4

Cong, BJP spar over purported hate video

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

Video grab of Rahul Gandhi with Christian priest George Ponnaiah

THE Congress and the BJP were on Saturday locked in a war of words after a clip of Rahul Gandhi's purported conversation with Christian priest George Ponnaiah during the Tamil Nadu leg of his Bharat Jodo Yatra went viral.

In the video that was tweeted by BJP leaders, Rahul purportedly asks, "So, Jesus Christ is a form of God. Is that correct?" Priest Ponnaiah responds: "He's a real God. God reveals him as a man, a human person, not like Shakti or this power."

The Congress attacked the BJP saying it was spreading mischief. It alleging that the ruling party has turned more desperate ever since the successful launch of the yatra.

"An atrocious tweet from the BJP hate factory is doing the rounds. It bears no relation whatsoever to what is recorded in the audio. This is typical BJP mischief that has become more desperate after the successful launch of BharatJodoYatra which is evoking such a huge response," said Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh. "What a morbid joke! Such attempts to damage the spirit of #BharatJodoYatra will fail miserably," he said in another tweet.

BJP leader Shehzad Poonawalla shot back saying, "George Ponnaiah who met Rahul Gandhi says 'Jesus is the only God unlike Shakti' ... This man was arrested for his Hindu hatred earlier — he also said 'I wear shoes because the impurities of Bharat Mata should not contaminate us.' Bharat Jodo with Bharat Todo icons."

SMRITI LEVELS SEDITION CHARGE AGAINST RAHUL

Union Minister for Women and Child Development and Minority Affairs Smriti Irani on Saturday levelled sedition charges against Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, who has embarked on party's ambitious 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' from Kanniyakumari to Kashmir, saying, "Rahul has said his fight is now against the Indian state, which has been allegedly using investigative agencies to nail the Opposition."

EXPRESS READ

President to Inaugurate Mysuru Darasa festival

Bengaluru: President Droupadi Murmu will inaugurate the Mysuru Dasara celebrations in Mysuru on September 26, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai announced on Saturday. There will be special security arrangements in view of Murmu's visit, he said.

'Prove blindfolded kids can read, win ₹5 lakh'

Mysuru: Federation of Indian Rationalist Associations president Narendra Nayak is offering a reward of Rs 5 lakh to institutions who can scientifically prove that kids can be trained to read, write and identify objects blindfolded.

NEW YORK, NEW STARS, NEW DESTINY

DOMINATED BY THE YOUNG STARS, THE US OPEN WILL SEE RECORDS BROKEN AS THE TWO UP AND COMING TALENTS GO HEAD TO HEAD IN THE SUMMIT CLASH AT THE FLUSHING MEADOWS ON SUNDAY. A LOOK...

RISING TALENT

Spain's Carlos Alcaraz has been considered a tennis prodigy since 2019. At 17, he qualified for the main draw of the 2021 Australian Open. He was the youngest match-winner in Madrid Open history, the youngest Spaniard to win an ATP tour title since Nadal in 2004. Now, he is just a step away from becoming the youngest to win a Grand Slam since Pete Sampras

HEAD TO HEAD **2-0** In favour of Alcaraz

RUUD'S DREAM SEASON

After missing the Australian Open due to injury, Casper Ruud made a comeback in the Argentina Open and hasn't looked back since. He won the Geneva Open and Swiss Open titles, reached the final of the French Open (first from his country Norway to reach a Slam final), and now, has followed it up with another final at the US Open | PTI

WORLD NO 1

Whosoever wins the US Open on Sunday will be crowned World No 1 in the men's ranking

LIVE @ 1:30 AM

CM assures a job to family of slain BJP youth wing leader Nettaru

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

CHIEF Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Saturday announced that he will soon issue an order to ensure a job to a family member of slain BJP Yuva Morcha leader Praveen Nettaru. According to sources, Praveen's wife is likely to get the job.

"He was our BJYM worker who sacrificed his life for the party and became a victim of the conspiracy," he said at the BJP's 'Janaspandana' rally held in Doddaballapur on Saturday.

Bommai's announcement was welcomed by the workers at the rally. Condolences were paid to the family members of Nettaru and former minister Umesh Katti who died recently.

Nettaru was murdered by a gang in his native Sullia taluk of Dakshina Kannada district on July 26. The BJP government cancelled 'Janothsava' scheduled on July 28 following protests by BJP workers.

Health Minister Dr K Sudhakar, one of the key persons in organising the rally, said, "BJP has proved itself to be a workers' party as we took a decision to cancel the rally then following advice from senior party leaders."

King Charles III signs an oath during the Accession Council in London | AP

Will uphold statute, says new monarch

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

KING Charles III was proclaimed as Britain's new monarch on Saturday at a historic meeting of the Accession Council, comprising senior royals, Supreme Court justices, members of clergy and government representatives, at London's St James Palace.

Though the throne passed on to the 73-year-old, the moment his mother Queen Elizabeth II passed away on Thursday, Saturday's ceremony formally declared him as the King.

A clerk of the Privy Council court read out the proclamation, accompanied by a 41-gun salute at London's Hyde Park and a 61-gun salute at Tower of London. The council members reaffirmed the proclamation with the words 'God save the King'.

Soon after the proclamation, King Charles III delivered a televised address in which he vowed to uphold the UK's constitutional principles. "I too now solemnly pledge myself, throughout the remaining time God grants me, to uphold the constitutional principles at the heart of our nation," Charles said. The Queen's funeral will be held on Septmeber 19. P9

SC relief for TMC, HC order stayed

SHRUTI KAKKAR @ New Delhi

TRINAMOOL Congress leaders heaved a sigh of relief after a Supreme Court bench stayed proceedings in a public interest litigation (PIL) against ballooning assets of 19 of them, including ministers, pending before the Calcutta High Court.

They were particularly upset as the HC had ordered the impleading of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in the case.

A bench of Chief Justice of India U U Lalit and justices S R Bhat and P S Narasimha, while issuing notice on Friday, posted the plea filed by Swarnakamal Saha for September 26.

The court's order came after senior advocate Kapil Sibal's submission that the HC's direction to the ED was without any foundation. The PIL was filed in the HC by one Biplob Chowdhury who questioned the astronomical growth in assets of the Trinamool lawmakers, citing their election affidavits.

The order directing ED to be a party was passed by the HC bench comprising Chief Justice Prakash Srivastava and Justice Rajarshi Bhardwaj. A review petition by three ministers named in the PIL — Firhad Hakim, Jyotipriyo Mullick and Arup Ray — challenging the decision to make ED a party in the matter is pending before the high court. Mullick called the SC stay order a moral victory for them and a slap on the face of the petitioner.

ROOT OF WOES

No Master Plan, no Master Plan Scheme...Reason why B'luru is flooding

BOSKY KHANNA @ Bengaluru

STATE capital Bengaluru has not had a Master Plan since 2015, but most interestingly, the city never had a Master Plan Scheme drawn up. This is why most Bengalureans experience traffic jams, complain of narrow or poorly maintained footpaths, or experience flooding whenever it rains heavily.

While the Master Plan lists out areas where development can happen, the Master Plan Scheme explains how the development should happen, and if there is an extension of an area, how it should be done.

According to rules, a Master Plan Scheme should be prepared along with a Master Plan. Officials and experts admit that the Master Plan Scheme was never prepared for Bengaluru.

"A Master Plan Scheme is salient to a city and its organised growth. Because of its absence, there is haphazard development in Bengaluru, regular traffic jams, malls and mega housing projects on two-lane roads, regular flooding in the city," a senior government official told TNSE. The official also pointed out that there is no agency to prepare the Master Plan Scheme, which is why it has never been done.

While many serving government officials in Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) and BBMP wonder what the Master Plan Scheme is, retired officials admit that it was not done decades ago when no new Layouts were being formed, and politicians or bureaucrats showed no interest.

What are Master plan & scheme?

Master Plan defines how each area should be utilised, and divides the city into zones. Master Plan Scheme lists out how roads and footpaths should be, development plan of each area. While the plan lists out areas for development, the scheme explains how it should happen.

An official from the Urban Development Department said: "An attempt to prepare the scheme was done in 2017-18, but it was scrapped in 2019 due to political reasons. Bengaluru's last Master Plan was prepared in 2007 — which was the 2015 Master Plan — and it continues even now. The 2031 plan was scrapped. Developments in Mahadevapura zone and other new areas are not part of the 2015 plan. Most developments in Bengaluru are therefore in the absence of a Master Plan and a Master Plan Scheme."

A senior BDA official added that the Authority does not prepare a Master Plan Scheme for the entire city, but only when Layouts are formed. "A scheme has been prepared for Kempegowda Layout, which lists how the Layout should be formed. This is the only one which has been done. Since Outer Ring Road, Peripheral Ring Road or any such mega infrastructure project had not been chalked out, no scheme was prepared. Metro is also not listed. Introduction of Floor Area Ratio for Central Business District areas is also due to lack of a scheme."

Director of Mantri Group in CID net for cheating

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) on Friday evening arrested Director, Mantri Developers, Sushil Mantri for allegedly defrauding home buyers and diverting the money and funds collected from them for his personal use. The CID action is based on two FIRs registered by the Cubbon Park police station, Bengaluru (28/20) and (72/20) under Sections 406, 409, 420, 120B read with 34 of the IPC for criminal breach of trust, cheating and criminal conspiracy and Sections 21, 22, 25 of Banning of Unregulated Deposit Schemes (BUDS) Act, 2019. The latter is a Central legislation to provide for a comprehensive mechanism to ban the unregulated deposit schemes, other than deposits taken in the ordinary course of business, and to protect the interest of depositors and for matter connected therewith or incidental thereto.

Sushil Mantri was arrested by ED on June 24 under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) for duping home buyers of 'Mantri Serenity,' 'Mantri Web City' and 'Mantri Energia' residential projects. He was enlarged on bail. P5